



Balance Your Time

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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So many of the things that we learn about life come through the example shown by our parents. My father died when he was only 52 years of age and that was several decades ago, but I still think about the lessons that he taught me through his actions. Today I will share some of the things that I learned from dad about how to invest time wisely:

1. Build a career - You don't have to become a workaholic to establish a reputation in the workplace, but you do have to focus on the things that are your responsibility. When dad was at work, he worked. His coffee and lunch breaks were taken consistently, and he did not cheat the system or expect more from his staff than he was willing to do. He gained respect as Manager of a Credit Union because he was honest, intelligent, interested in people, and could be trusted to do what he promised.
2. Develop a second income with the skills you already have - Throughout his life, dad always kept money that he earned from miscellaneous activities in a special place in his wallet. The deposits in what he called his "slush fund" came from activities such as building furniture for the kindergarten room at school, driving a truck during harvest or assembling new farm equipment for the implement dealer. The fact that he had this second income allowed him to purchase items that would otherwise not be possible and also reduced any need that he might have had to ask for a raise at his regular job.
3. Rest - So often, during a lunch break or on a holiday we would hear dad say, "Give me ten minutes". Dad was a master at being able to lie down for a short period of time and wake up feeling totally refreshed. This was because he knew how to how "shut down" his brain and relax his body quickly. So many people lie down and then allow their minds to think about things that prevent rest when they could have used the time to actually benefit through rest.
4. Find enjoyable hobbies - When you have things that interest you, then you become more interesting and less needy. Dad sang in a barbershop chorus, worked on paint by number projects and loved both playing and watching sports. No one ever had to worry about him demanding attention because he knew how to entertain himself.
5. Honour family - Dad respected and visited family members from both his and mom's side on a regular basis. He would stop in at my maternal grandmother's or at his brother's even if it was only for an hour to "catch up", share a laugh or recall a good memory. He always supported the activities of my sister and me, enjoyed a wonderful partnership with our mother and spoke love for all of us through his actions.
6. Give to others - I never ever saw dad ignore the need of another person. He would reach into his pocket and give to individuals and to charity. He listened to those who needed an ear and encouragement. Helping others usually helps us to realize that our own troubles are not that significant and that they will not disappear by merely worrying more.

Everyone loved my father and admired the way that he lived life with zest and wisdom. One of the reasons that he could do this, I believe, is that he maintained a good, healthy balance that included taking responsibility in caring for self and caring for others.

What could you change this week that will bring better balance into your life?